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MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT

July 2005 – June 2006

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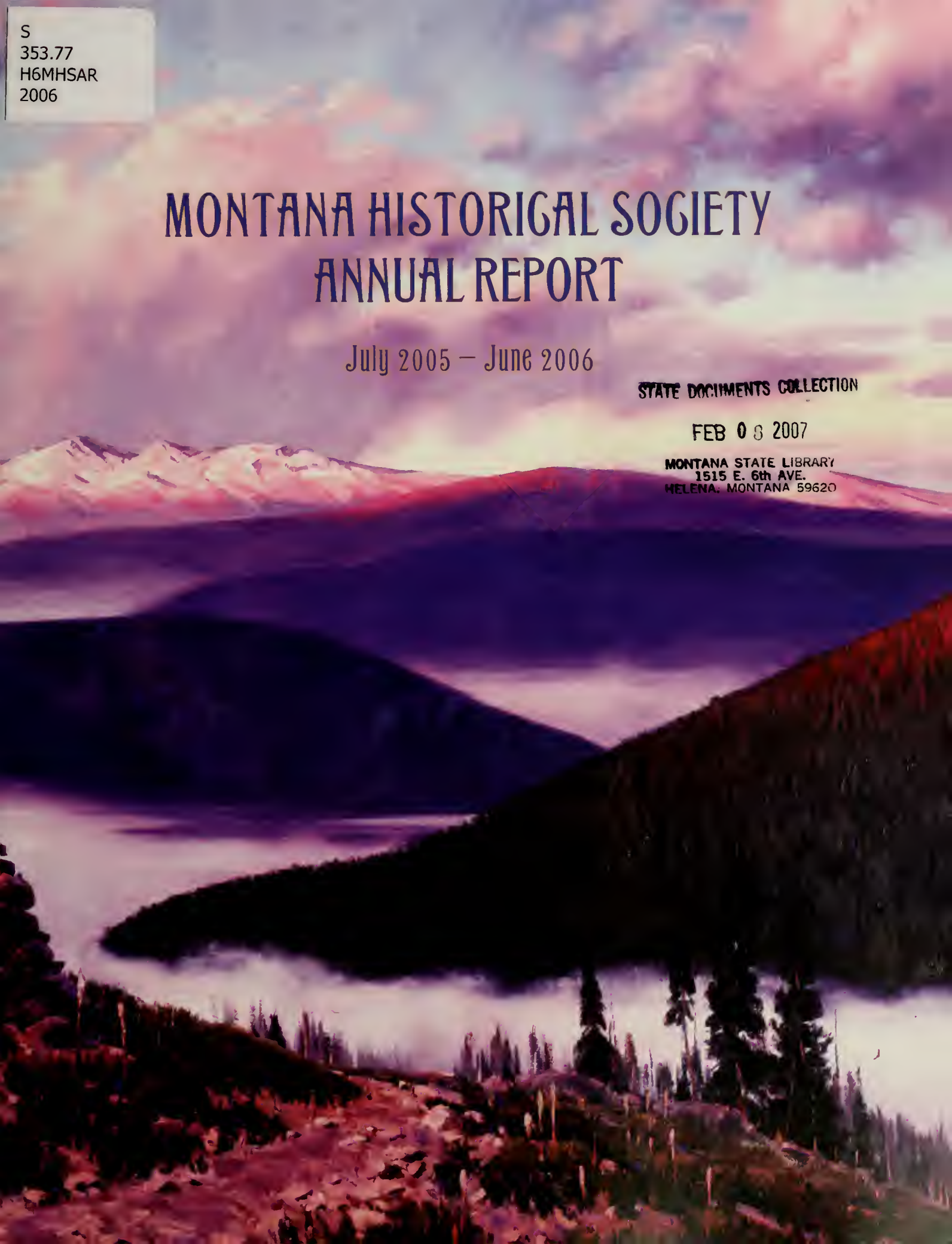

A Society to Match the Scenery

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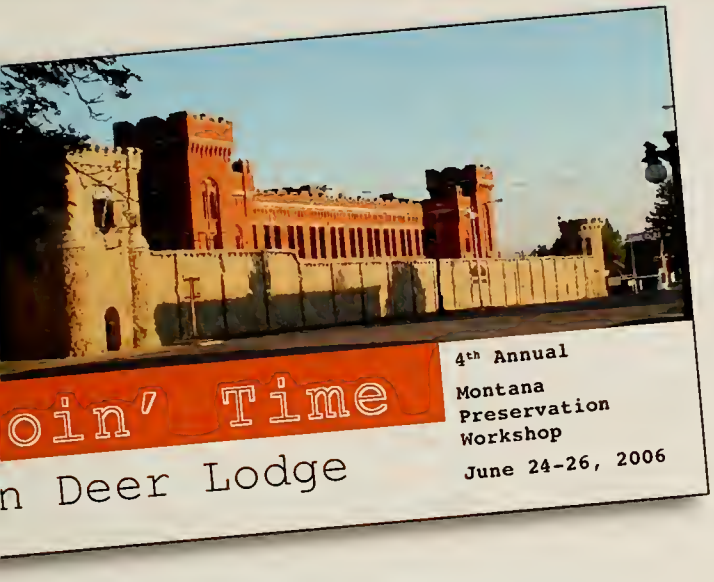
The Montana Historical Society's programs and exhibits serve interests as wide as the Big Sky, and our collections are as diverse as Montana's breathtaking scenery. All elements of our history come together at the Montana Historical Society, and we proudly share this past year's highlights.

Society Events and Programs

- The Society hosted the 32nd Annual Montana History Conference, "Encounter Montana," in Helena.
- The 2005 Western Rendezvous of Art events had record attendance, attracting over 3,000 people. The sales from the quick draw and art show exceeded $480,000 and garnered $52,000 for art acquisition.
- The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) co-organized and sponsored the fourth annual statewide historic preservation workshop, *Doin' Time in Deer Lodge*.
- The Holiday Home Tour and the Secret Garden Tour raised funds for Original Governor's Mansion restoration.
- The Montana Heritage Project hosted a spring festival for students and a summer institute on place-based education for teachers. Project students also held local history celebrations in their communities from Bigfork to White Sulphur Springs.
- The March lecture series highlighted Montana arts and antiques.
- Over 1,400 people attended 38 Thursday night programs and 18 additional author talks and book signings.
- A week-long history camp for kids (organized in cooperation with CommunityWorks!) focused on Lewis and Clark.
- Children's Activity Day summer programs attracted over 430 children.
- MHS's Archaeology Day brought demonstrations of prehistoric technology and artifacts to over 250 elementary students.
- The Society recorded more than 120 ninety-second radio spots, "History Half Notes," for broadcast on Helena stations and potentially statewide.
- MHS hosted a reception for the families of the Sedition Pardon Ceremony at the Capitol on May 3, 2006; welcomed 295 state employees on two Employee Appreciation Days; and hosted 580 people for American Indian Heritage Day.



Friends of the Society Volunteer Activities

Our volunteer corps—the Friends of the Society—is now over 134 strong. The Friends donated 8,045 hours, leading group tours of the museum, cataloguing artifacts and photographs, preparing food for receptions and gallery openings, transcribing oral histories, assisting with mailings, and helping with events.

Society Exhibits

Montana's Museum

Twelve temporary and permanent exhibits featured Montana's art and history. Four new exhibits premiered:

- *Splendid was the Trail: The Photographs of K. D. Swan*
- *Photographing Montana 1894-1928: The World of Evelyn Cameron*
- *Got Art?* (Featuring new art acquisitions)
- *The Rendezvous Legacy Collection*

State Capitol Exhibits

- The Society installed art from the Capitol Collection in the governor and lieutenant governors' offices, and at the executive residence.

Traveling Exhibits

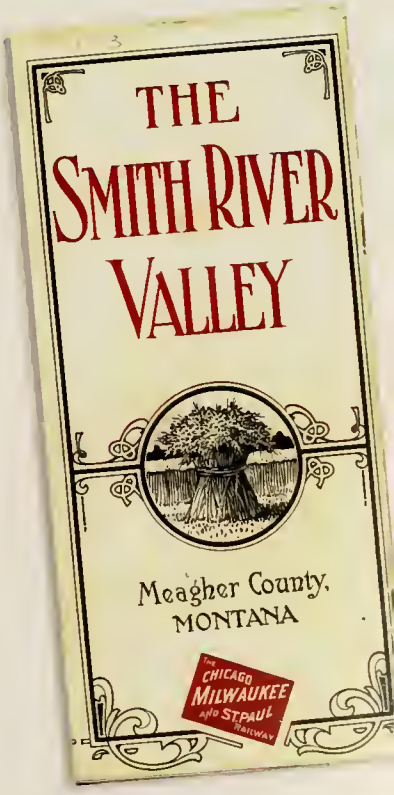
- *A Taste of the Past*, produced in April 2006 with a grant from the Montana Committee for the Humanities, traveled to Butte and Libby.
- *Documenting the Corps of Discovery* traveled to Fort Benton, Clancy, Three Forks, Sidney, and Billings in Montana, and to Newman, Georgia, and St. Louis, Missouri.
- *A Capital Capitol* traveled to Polson.
- *Hope in Hard Times: New Deal Photographs of Montana, 1936–1942*, traveled to Deer Lodge, Missoula, and Polson.
- *Photographing Montana 1894–1928: The World of Evelyn Cameron* traveled to Chinook, Malta, Missoula, Billings, and Bozeman.
- *F. Jay Haynes: Fifty Views* traveled to St. Louis, Missouri.

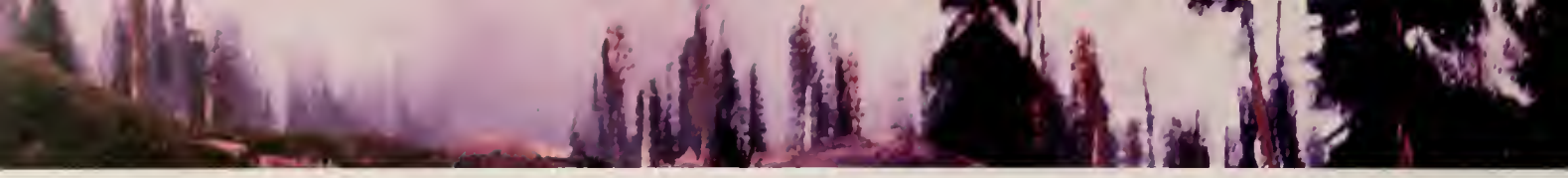
Preservation Activities

- SHPO added 14 properties to the National Register of Historic Places in Beaverhead, Broadwater, Cascade, Flathead, Glacier, Golden Valley, Lewis and Clark, Madison, Missoula, Park, Toole, and Yellowstone counties.
- SHPO updated its website with additional technical assistance and new historic walking tours.
- The Society's National Register Sign Program manufactured 94 signs for sites from Glasgow to Hamilton.
- SHPO distributed $82,500 in annual matching support to 15 communities within the Montana Certified Local Government (CLG) network of local preservation offices.
- Revised and expanded with SHPO's assistance, the Butte-Anaconda National Historic Landmark (NHL) became the largest urban NHL west of the Mississippi.
- SHPO added 1,185 newly inventoried and recorded historic and archaeological properties to the State Antiquities Database, now exceeding 45,000 properties in total.

Awards Received

- *True West* magazine readers voted Montana's Museum "Best of the West."
- The National Trust for Historic Preservation presented a 2005 Honor Award to Montana SHPO for its role in developing the multi-state Missouri River Main Stem Programmatic Agreement for managing cultural and historic sites in



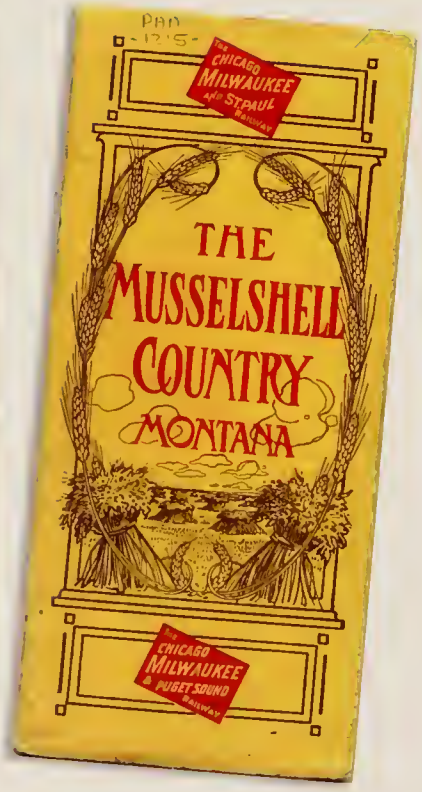


a cooperative and culturally sensitive manner.

- *Montana The Magazine of Western History* won the Western Heritage Center and National Cowboy Hall of Fame's Wrangler Award and the Western Writers of America's Spur Award. The magazine was also named a finalist for an award given by the Army Historical Foundation.
- The MHS Press book *Beyond Spirit Tailings,* by Ellen Baumler, received a 2006 Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History.

Major Fiscal Year 2005 Grants and Donations

- SHPO received a national Preserve America grant for $150,000 to support rural community preservation initiatives in heritage interpretation, education, planning, and tourism.
- The Liz Claiborne Art Ortenberg Foundation fully supported the Montana Heritage Project through the end of the fiscal year.
- SHPO received $20,000 in cost-share assistance from the Bureau of Land Management to facilitate electronic data sharing.
- The Department of Commerce granted $50,000 to the Lewis and Clark Commission in support of its Grants Program.
- Grants from the Montana Committee for the Humanities enabled museum cataloging work, aided the production of the traveling exhibit, "Montana by Food," and supported the *Montana Mosaic* conference.
- The National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Program provided $30,000 toward interpretive materials for the exhibit *Neither Empty Nor Unknown.*
- The Golden Triangle Curriculum Cooperative contributed $36,000 toward creation of a web-based curriculum resource for K-12 teachers.
- The Montana Land Title Association Foundation funded the research and writing of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places through a $10,000 donation.
- The City of Helena and Lewis and Clark County contributed $45,000 toward conservation, mounting, and installation of three Jack Beauchamp murals.



Settler recruitment brochures in the Research Center Collection

Montana Historical Society Publications

- In partnership with world-famous pianist Philip Aaberg, MHS Press produced its first audiobook: *Beyond Spirit Tailings: Montana's Mysteries, Ghosts, and Haunted Places* by Ellen Baumler.
- The Press also published *Conveniences Sorely Needed: Montana's Historic Highway Bridges, 1860–1956,* by Jon Axline in fall 2005 and *Cowboy Trout: Western Fly Fishing As If It Matters* by Paul Schullery in spring 2006.
- The Montana Heritage Project produced the video *When History Speaks* in cooperation with the Library of Congress.

Helping Montana Schools Teach History

- Heritage Project teachers presented eight sessions on regional literature and community research at Montana's MEA/MFT Educator's Conference in October 2005.
- Hands-On History footlockers traveled to 707 classrooms across Montana, serving 16,152 children. They included the Society's latest addition to the footlocker program, *Montana Indian Stories,* produced with funds from the Golden Triangle Curriculum Cooperative. Education staff shared information about the footlocker program at conferences in Pittsburgh, PA, as well as in Missoula and Billings.
- The Society conducted statewide educational resource workshops as part of the Golden Triangle Curriculum Cooperative's Teaching American History Grant.

Governor Brian Schweitzer joins the publications staff to recognize its award-winning magazine.

Assisting the Public

- The Research Center added over 5,000 records to the Montana Shared Catalog, an online searchable database. It also submitted 113 finding aids for collections to the online database Northwest Digital Archives (nwda.wsulibs.wsu.edu), making over 400 collection inventories accessible online.
- Library, archives, and photograph archives staff assisted 11,681 patrons with research questions and filled 413 orders for 4,726 reproductions of photographs.
- Museum staff assisted 918 individuals or institutions with reference requests.
- The Museum loaned exhibits to museums/historical societies from California to New York and to Alberta, Canada.
- The Society awarded two Bradley fellowships (to research collections on the refugee Cree and the Huntley Project) and a Sobotka internship (to research census data and organize volunteers for the Society's African American History Project).
- SHPO responded to 1,864 requests from agencies, organizations, and the public for information and reviews of projects with potential to impact state heritage properties and archaeological sites.
- SHPO facilitated $504,000 in federal preservation tax credits to Montana owners, who invested $2.5 million in the rehabilitation of commercial historic properties.

New Acquisitions

- 1,708 books and maps, 510 feet of archival records, 67 oral history interviews, and 10,435 photographic images were added to the Research Center's permanent collection this year.
- The Museum acquired 76 new collections, which include a total of 492 objects.

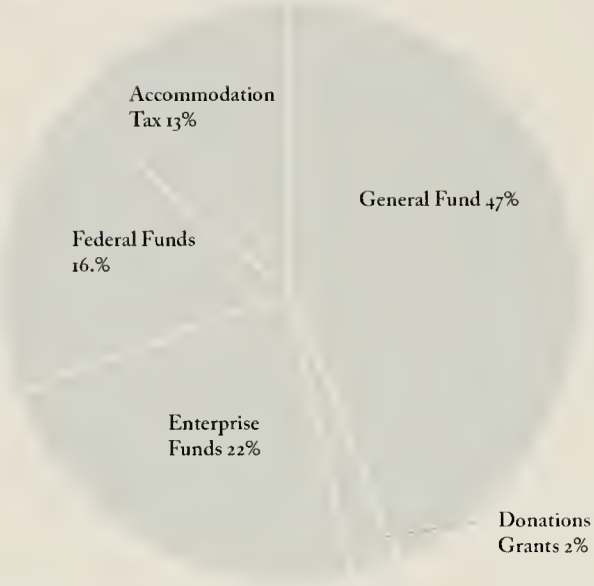
Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Activities

- The Bicentennial Commission allocated $199,477 in grants, funded in part from the sale of Montana Bicentennial license plates and $50,000 received from Travel Montana.
- "Explore! the Big Sky," Montana's first of two signature events, concluded with a Fourth of July parade in Great Falls. Corps II programming, sponsored by the National Park Service, visited Great Falls, Helena, Bozeman, Dillon, Hamilton, and Lolo in 2005. Bicentennial activities resumed in Montana on June 21, 2006, with the opening of a 19-day event in the Missoula area, the "Lewis & Clark in the Rockies Bicentennial Festival."
- Construction of the long-term exhibit, *Neither Empty Nor Unknown: Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark*, neared completion, in anticipation of the September 2006 opening.
- Through sales of miniature bronzes and bronze and silver medallions, the Society raised approximately $200,000 towards an estimated total of $350,000 to finance the creation of the monumental bas-relief, *We Proceeded On*. The artwork will be installed in the state capitol's Senate Chamber in October.

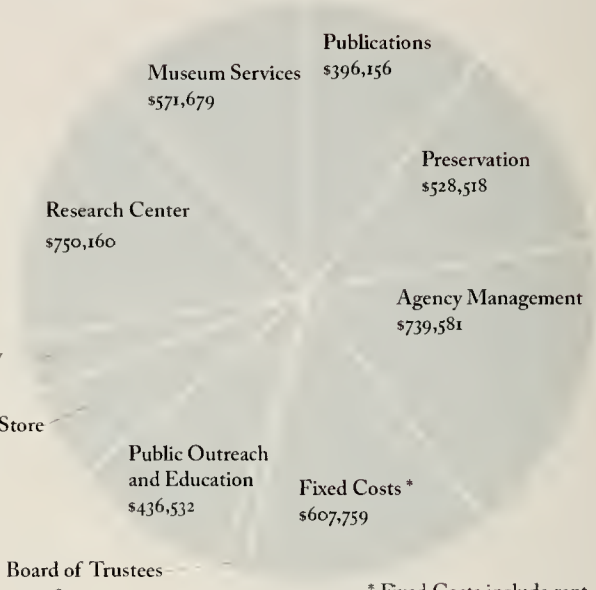
Youngsters practice the shawl dance during Children's Activity Day.

Montana Historical Society Fiscal Year 2006 Budget: $4,470,025

Funding



Expenditures



* Fixed Costs include rent, insurance, capitol grounds maintenance

Society at a Glance

- Governed by a 15-member statewide Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor.
- Organized into 5 programs: Research Center, Museum, Publications, State Historic Preservation Office, and Administration.
- Functions with 55 full-time and 24 part-time employees and an annual budget of $4 million.
- Publishes a quarterly western history journal, an electronic newsletter, and three to six books each year.
- Lists Montana properties in the National Register of Historic Places and promotes $3 to $5 million in historic preservation rehabilitation work through tax credit incentives annually.
- Holds in trust for Montana and provides access to over 50,000 books; 455,000 historical photographs; 8,000 maps; 2,000 oral history interviews; 22,000 linear feet of manuscripts and state records; 55,000 artifacts; 8,000 pieces of artwork; 45,900 inventory files for all recorded Montana archaeological, historic, and architectural sites; and 28,600 cultural resource survey reports.
- Enriches the lives of thousands of Montana students by providing curriculum resources, teacher training, tours, and hands-on activities.
- Owns the Original Governor's Mansion in Helena and manages it with assistance from a citizen restoration board.
- Qualifies under federal tax codes to receive tax-deductible charitable gifts and actively solicits private and public grants.

MHS Board of Trustees, 2005-2006

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A Society to Match the Scenery: A Message from the Director Richard Sims

In *The Sound of Mountain Water,* novelist and essayist Wallace Stegner wrote: "one cannot be pessimistic about the West. This is still the native home of hope. When it fully learns that cooperation, not rugged individualism, is the quality that most characterizes and preserves it, then it will have achieved itself and outlived its origins. Then [the West] has a chance to create a society to match its scenery."

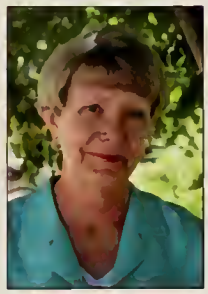
We have a chance to create a Montana Historical Society to match the Montana scenery, and we will take that opportunity over the next several years. We will do it because the West is more than the native home of hope. It is also the home of accomplishment against rugged odds, sometimes in spite of rugged individualism. "Matching the scenery" will require us to take an inventory of that scenery and the people whose stories reside there, a heritage landscape that includes the Missouri Breaks and the Vigilantes, the Sweetgrass Hills and sweet fields of alfalfa, the tipi rings and the missile silos, the Corps of Discovery and the corner grocery, the leaning barns and the lasting memories. From Flathead Lake to Medicine Rocks, from the Hi-Line to the Bitterroots, the scenery is high, wide, and historic.

Our current outreach touches Montana's width and breadth. Color-coded push pins dot the project map from Hamilton to Wibaux. However, there is more to do. The Montana Historical Society will match the state's boundless scenery when we are able to offer residents and visitors a full range of services in a wonderful new facility and with a renewed vision of the Society in all its parts: research, education, museum programs, preservation, and publications. The Society's accomplishments over the last year have been many, and we celebrate them. Yet we also set our sights ahead. With the cooperation of all Montanans, and of those outside the state who hold a special regard for Montana, we will achieve our goal of a renewed Montana Historical Society in a new building—a Society to match the scenery.

Richard Sims

Beaded sneakers, by Evelyn Eagleman, exhibited in *Neither Empty nor Unknown*

Dear Friends,



Montana is a land rich in history. Native Americans drew from its abundance, and the landscape brought hunters and trappers, miners, homesteaders, and more, all seeking a new life. These are our forefathers whose histories we carefully preserve. From Troy to Alzada, and Westby to Dillon, we strive to tell the stories of our ancestors.

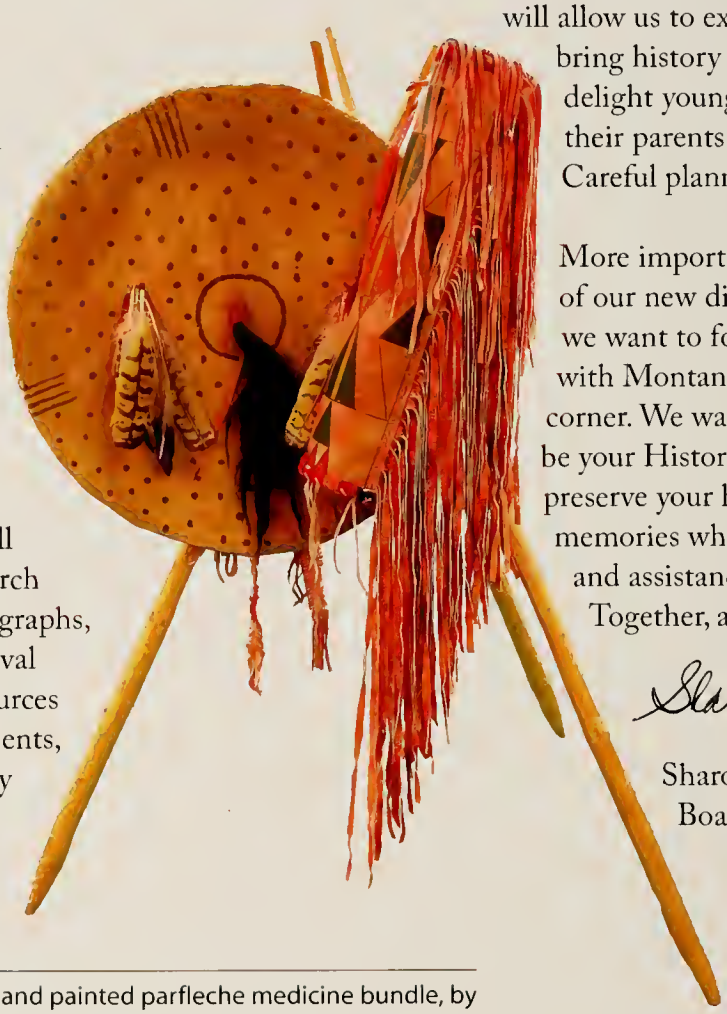
Preserving the state's culture and history for the education and enjoyment of all is our mission at the Montana Historical Society. *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, our press books, the forthcoming *Montana Mosaic* DVD, and a Montana history textbook in the works for seventh and eighth grades tell Montana's stories. The Research Center's collections of photographs, newspapers, books, and archival documents are splendid resources for scholars, researchers, students, and those interested in family histories. The C. M. Russell art collection is the best you will find. The new exhibit, *Neither Empty Nor Unknown*, opening September 21, promises an unforgettable experience. And our Historic Preservation and National Register Sign programs continue to bring recognition to Montana's special historic sites.

We at the Montana Historical Society look forward to the coming year, hoping it will bring us closer to our dream of a new History Center. A new facility will allow us to expand our offerings and bring history to life in ways that will delight youngsters while captivating their parents and other adult visitors. Careful planning will be the key.

More importantly, under the leadership of our new director, Richard Sims, we want to form strong partnerships with Montanans from corner to corner. We want to work with you to be your Historical Society, to help you preserve your heritage places and family memories while providing information and assistance whenever we can. Together, all things are possible.

Sharon Lincoln

Sharon Lincoln, President
Board of Trustees, 2006-2007



Reproductions of a willow tripod and painted parfleche medicine bundle, by Darrell Norman, and a dog-days shield by Ken Woody, exhibited in *Neither Empty nor Unknown*

Cover: Detail of *Generations Passed*, oil on canvas, by John Potter, exhibited in *Neither Empty nor Unknown*